

**Second nest record for Archer's Ground Robin *Dryocichloides archeri***

Masterson (1981) was the first to describe the nest and eggs of Archer's Ground Robin *Dryocichloides archeri*. He found the nest and two eggs on 17 January 1959 in the Rwenzori Mountains of western Uganda. Here we describe the second nest and set of eggs. Since *D. archeri* is a little known species, and because the nest and eggs we located differed considerably from those found by Masterson, we make special note of this record.

The following is Masterson's (1981) description of the nest and eggs:

"The nest was a neat cup of rootlets and tendrils let into a depression about 1.2 m up on the side of a great mass of moss that clung to the trunk of one of the senecios. There was no outer bulk to the nest as the moss itself provided the support for the cup. When taken, the eggs were a pale blue, freckled with a few small insipid brown spots, mostly about the middle and towards the top, but not forming any distinct ring of markings. They measured 24.4 x 15.7 and 23.5 x 16.0 mm."

Masterson collected one of the parent birds so there can be no mistake as to the species.

On 28 October 1987 we found a *D. archeri* nest at 2260 m altitude a.s.l. in the Impenetrable (= Bwindi) Forest of south-western Uganda (0°53'–1°08'S, 29°35'–29°50'E). The nest was situated 1.3 m above the ground on a ledge that had been created by a road cut. The ledge was about 3.5 m high at this place. The nest was located in a crevice on the top of a small clump of grass. Except for this grass, there was no vegetation on the ledge for at least 15 m to either side of the nest. The nest was overhung about 0.5 m by a protruding ledge and appeared to be completely protected from rain. Because of the road, the area in front of the nest was open for about 8 m. This nest was considerably more substantial than the one described by Masterson, although the basic materials used to construct it were similar. Rather than locating the nest on a mass of moss, the bird(s) had carried considerable fresh moss filaments and some fine rootlets to the site, weaving them together to create the bowl of the nest. The nest cup was lined with a few dried grass blades and rootlets. The nest had the following dimensions: greatest outside diameter 18 cm, shortest outside diameter 11 cm, cup depth 2.5 cm, cup diameter 3.2 cm.

When found, the nest held two eggs but one had been punctured and was empty. Both were grey-green but so heavily flecked and stippled as to appear almost pale brown, especially towards the ends. Thus, the eggs differed considerably in colour from those found by Masterson. Both eggs were unusually symmetrical and lacked distinctive broad and pointed ends. One egg was 25 x 18 mm—somewhat larger than those measured by Masterson.

We had considerable difficulty seeing the adult on the next day. It consistently flew off into dense cover before we could approach to within 10 m. On 14 November, therefore, we returned at 20:00 (after dark) and, using a flashlight, got an excellent look at the incubating adult for 2 min from 0.7 m.

On checking the nest on 2 December we found that it had been abandoned. The one egg and nest were collected and deposited in the National Museum, Nairobi.

**Acknowledgements**

Our field work is supported by the World Wildlife Fund. We thank the Uganda Research

Council, the President's Office, and Forest Department for permission to work in the Impenetrable Forest.

### Reference

MASTERSON, A.N.B. 1981. Notes from the Rwenzori Mountains, including a description of the nest and eggs of Archer's Ground Robin *Dryocichloides archeri*. *Scopus* 5: 33-34.

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*Scopus* 12: 88-89, March 1989

Received 12 October 1988

### First nest record, and other notes, for the Scaly-breasted Illadopsis *Trichastoma albipectus*

Although the Scaly-breasted Illadopsis *Trichastoma albipectus* is one of the more common, tame and vocal bird species in the rainforests of eastern Zaïre, southern Sudan, Uganda and western Kenya, its drab coloration and the dense undergrowth in which it occurs, make it difficult to observe. There are apparently no breeding records for *T. albipectus* and its nest and egg remain undescribed (Chapin 1953, Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1960, Brown & Britton 1980). On 25 November 1983 I found the nest and eggs of this species at Kanyawara, Kibale Forest, western Uganda (0°34N, 30°21E) at an altitude of 1500 m.

I saw a small brown bird perch briefly at a height of 1 m and then drop to the ground. Searching the area, I flushed the bird off its nest. It was subsequently flushed several more times during my other visits to the site. I was able to approach to 1 m of the incubating adult and place my hand to within 15 cm of it. The bird would flit from the nest suddenly, land about 1 m away and move on the ground, disappearing into the dense undergrowth. When I moved away from the nest the adult returned within a few minutes. It never flew to the nest but rather walked in from several metres away. Although I observed the bird clearly on the nest several times, it was not possible to view its underparts. On 27 November I mist-netted an adult at the nest and made positive identification prior to releasing it.

The nest was located in primary forest at the bottom of a large valley. Here there was a dense ground cover of ferns and large forbs (e.g., *Palisota schweinfurthii*, *Pollea condensata*, *Piper capensis*, *Aframomum* sp.) to a height of about 80 cm. The understory was fairly open while the middle and upper stories were well developed, creating dense shade on the ground. The most common tree species were *Celtis durandii*, *Olea welwitschii* and *Strombosia scheffleri*. The nest was under a small fern in a slight indentation on damp, but not wet, ground. It was a loose, shallow structure of brown, damp, rotting tree leaves (mostly those of *Teclea nobilis* and *Bosqueia phoberos*) lined with dead leaves of *C. durandii*. A few rootlets had been placed at the bottom of the nest cup. A large fallen *P. schweinfurthii* leaf prevented access to the nest from one side as well as providing some shelter from rain. The nest was extremely well concealed. The nearest